

3rd PDG cohort graduates

By [Iylia Marsya Iskandar](#) - October 21, 2023 @ 7:01am



Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek (second from right) awarding a certificate to SMK Tamparuli, Sabah, teacher Juliah Jumpil during the Program Duta Guru graduation ceremony in Sepang on Wednesday. With them are Yayasan PETRONAS chief executive officer Shariah Nelly Francis and Education deputy director-general (policy and curriculum sector) Dr Ahmad Rafee Che Kassim. -NSTP/ROHANIS SHUKRI

SEPANG: A total of 243 teachers have graduated from the third cohort of the Program Duta Guru (PDG), marking a significant achievement in the promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education in Malaysia.

PDG is an initiative between Yayasan PETRONAS and the Education Ministry through its Education Policy Planning and Research Division, with Teach for Malaysia and PETROSAINS as implementation partners.

This initiative is aimed at elevating the skills of 4,500 STEM teachers by 2030.

STEM is an approach to learning and development that integrates the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Through STEM, students develop key skills, such as problem solving, creativity and critical analysis.

The third cohort of teachers, who graduated on Wednesday after going through a two-year training programme, would join 250 teachers from previous cohorts as teacher ambassadors to increase interest and competence in STEM subjects and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), especially among B40 students.

During the graduation ceremony, which was part of the PDG National Symposium 2023, Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek said this would be a starting point for the third cohort of teachers in increasing the potential for the STEM field in the country.

"The teachers have given inspiration in birthing students who are analytical, creative and innovative thinkers, which would be an asset to the country."

She added that the ministry would also intensify efforts to promote STEM, including conducting a series of tours to ensure stakeholders would cultivate the field of STEM in their respective areas.

Fadhlina said this was in line with the government's commitment to strengthen the field of STEM in the country, as reflected in the 2024 Budget when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim announced the establishment of a Cross-Ministry STEM Special Committee to set targets and measures to increase student involvement.

Anwar also announced that the government would allocate RM100 million for the maintenance and upgrading of school computer laboratories and the acquisition of new equipment for STEM education.

She said they would also ensure that stakeholders understand that STEM has a lot of prospective career paths.

"(One) effort is to tell them how to talk to parents, which can be a bit challenging to convince them that STEM has career prospects.

"This is because parents tend to choose and determine their children's career choices and the future of their children, and they are not convinced to choose STEM as an educational option (as they think it doesn't have career prospects)."

Fadhlina also commended the symposium's theme — Cultivating Future-Proof Problem Solvers — as she said it highly reflected the current needs of the country.

"The country needs problem solvers to solve current issues, especially community issues."

Teachers who take part in PDG would be involved in various workshops, dialogues and a series of discussions which among others expose teachers to the latest STEM and industry knowledge.

They would also be able to form a community and exchange ideas and solutions for their classrooms.

This approach is to help teachers to apply the knowledge gained in the classroom to improve HOTS among students and further produce talent to meet the challenges

and demands of the new era for Malaysia to progress and remain competitive at the global level.